

UNCLASSIFIED

Department of State

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ACTION 10-25

2139

BUENOS 01189 01 OF 03 082219Z

INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

A1050

INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 EUR-01 AOS-00 HA-05 SR-04 CIAE-00  
CODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 NCAE-00 INRE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NEW-04  
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4201  
INFO AMEMBASSY ACUNCIÓN  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS

DECONTROL

SECTION 1 OF 3 BUENOS AIRES-1139

USEEC

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 12065: GDS 2/8/86 (FRIEDMAN, TOWNSEND B.) OR-P  
TAGS: SHUM, AR  
SUBJECT: (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - FEBRUARY 23, 1980

REF: BUENOS AIRES 0985

SUMMARY: THE GOA AND THE LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS  
HAVE BOTH REACTED POSITIVELY TO CONTENT OF THE DEPARTMENT'S  
HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON ARGENTINA. THE GOVERNMENT SAW TO  
IT THAT THE FULL REPORT WAS PUBLISHED IN ARGENTINE PAPERS.  
SUBSEQUENTLY, IT BEGAN TO MAKE RITUALISTIC NATIONALISTIC  
NOISES ALLEGING SUCH REPORTS CONSTITUTE UNACCEPTABLE  
INTERVENTION. WE HAVE UNCOVERED NO SENSE OF SHOCK  
OR SURPRISE AT THE REPORT'S REVALUATIONS.

RENEGADE SECURITY GROUPS SEEM TO BE RESPONSIBLE  
FOR THE THREATS BEING MADE TO A GROUP OF PROMINENT  
HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS. HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS ALSO  
BELIEVE THAT THESE SAME DARK FORCES MAY BE RESPONSIBLE  
FOR THE ARREST OF TWO OFFICERS OF THE COMMUNIST FRONT  
LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE IN MENDOZA. ON THE  
OTHER HAND, THE ARREST RATHER THAN THE DISAPPEARANCE  
OF A PST ACTIVISTS IS TAKEN AS A POSITIVE SIGN. FIVE  
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED OPTION CASES WERE RESCINDED BY THE GOA.  
END SUMMARY.

1. HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT WELL RECEIVED----

THE CONTENT OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS  
REPORT ON ARGENTINA HAS BEEN WELL RECEIVED BOTH BY THE  
GOA AND BY ARGENTINE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS. THE GOVERN-  
MENT DISCREETLY ASSOCIATED ITSELF WITH THE REPORT BY  
IMMEDIATELY TRANSLATING IT AND ENCOURAGING THE NEWSPAPERS  
PROMINENTLY TO REPRINT ITS ENTIRE TEXT. ONLY SUBSE-  
QUENTLY DID THE GOA DELIVER US AND PUBLICIZE A STIFF NATIONALISTIC  
-- BUT PRO-FORMA -- NOTE OF PROTEST OBJECTING TO THE CONCEPT OF  
SUCH A REPORT AS AN UNACCEPTABLE INTERVENTION IN ARGENTINA'S  
INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

THE GOVERNMENT, WE UNDERSTAND, WAS PLEASED AND  
SURPRISED THAT THE REPORT CAREFULLY SET THE "DIRTY  
WAR" IN CONTEXT AND TOOK DUE NOTE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS IM-  
PROVEMENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS. FOR

THEIR PART, THE LEADERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS HAVE  
TOLD US THAT THEY FOUND THE REPORT'S RECOUNTING OF  
THE GROSS VIOLATIONS "HARDLY  
"COMPLETE," "OBJECTIVE" ETC... THEY ARE PARTICULARLY  
PLEASED THAT THE REPORT CLEARLY IDENTIFIES ARGENTINE  
SECURITY FORCES AS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE VIOLATIONS.

GOVERNMENT SOURCES HAVE EXPRESSED MODERATE CONCERN  
TO US THAT THERE MAY BE A REACTION IN MILITARY SECTORS  
TO THE GOA'S DECISION TO PUBLISH THE FULL REPORT IN  
ARGENTINA. HOWEVER, OUR MILITARY CONTACTS PRIVATELY  
STATE THEIR BELIEF THAT THE REPORT WAS "OBJECTIVE"  
AND "ACCURATE," EVEN WHILE VOICING OBJECTION TO WHAT  
THEY SEE AS ITS AGGRAVATING INTERVENTION INTO ARGENTINE  
AFFAIRS.

THE FACT THAT THE REPORT SEEMS TO HAVE SET WELL  
BOTH WITH THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
GROUPS IS A COMMENTARY ON SOMETHING OTHER THAN ITS  
SKILLFUL DRAFTING. WE BELIEVE THAT FOR MOST ARGENTINES  
THE REPORT'S REVELATIONS ABOUT GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS  
VIOLATIONS ARE NEITHER SURPRISING NOR DISTURBING.  
HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE TEACH ARGENTINES TO EXPECT  
VIOLENCE, ARBITRARINESS, DEMORALIZATION AND CRUELTY  
AS NORMAL ASPECTS OF LIFE, EVEN IF THEY SEEK TO WRAP  
THEMSELVES IN A SUPERFICIAL COAT OF CIVILITY. WHEN  
THAT COAT IS REGULARLY STRIPPED OFF THE SIGHT ARGUES  
NEITHER PRURIENT NOR RIGHTEOUS INTEREST, JUST  
INDIFFERENCE. IN PUBLISHING THE REPORT THE GOA  
ACKNOWLEDGED RATHER THAN CYNICALLY EXPLOITED THESE  
ATTITUDES.

2. THREATENING LETTERS----

THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS INVOLVED WITH THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTER FOR LEGAL STUDIES HAVE BEEN  
THE RECIPIENTS OF A SERIES OF THREATENING ANONYMOUS  
LETTERS IN THE PAST SIX WEEKS. THIS GROUP INCLUDES  
EMILIO MIGNONE AND AGUSTO CONTE MACDONALD. THE LATEST  
LETTER MAIDO JANUARY 25 STATED "THE WAR GOES ON...  
DISAPPEARANCES CONTINUE... WE CAN TAKE YOU WHEN WE  
WISH". MIGNONE TOLD US THAT HE VIEWS THE LETTERS AS  
A SIGN OF THEIR AUTHORS' WEAKNESS. HE REASONS THAT  
IN THE PAST THE GROUP WHICH PENNED THE MISSIVES WOULD  
HAVE SIMPLY ACTED RATHER THAN HAVE THREATENED. NEVERTHE-  
LESS, WE ARE DISCUSSING THESE THREATS WITH APPROPRIATE  
ELEMENTS OF THE GOA. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THEY REPRESENT  
APPROVED ACTION BY CONSTITUTED ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES  
RATHER, LIKE THE THREAT TO BUENOS AIRES HERALD EDITOR  
BOB COX, THEY ARE THE WORK OF DISGROUNTED, HARDLINE  
ELEMENTS IN THE SECURITY FORCES. WE HAVE HEARD THAT  
RETIRED GENERAL SUAREZ MASON HAS BRAGGED THAT HE COOKED  
UP THE COX LETTER IN LEAGUE WITH FRIENDS IN ONE OF THE

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ( ) In Part (X) In Full  
( ) Classify as ( ) Extend as ( ) Downgrade to  
Date Declassify on Reason

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BOX 8114 (2/21)

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FOR THE LAST  
THREE YEARS  
THE GOA HAS  
BEEN SAYING  
THAT MOST  
ARGENTINE  
DON'T CARE  
ABOUT  
THE PRO  
NOW  
THEY'RE  
SPYING  
REVEALING  
ALL ALONG  
BUT DON'T  
CARE.

BOB  
COX +  
SUAREZ  
MASON

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MAJOR ARMY INTELLIGENCE UNITS. GIVEN SUAREZ MASON'S  
MENTALITY AND THE RECORD OF THE UNIT IN QUESTION, THE REPORT OF  
SUAREZ MASON'S PRIDE OF AUTHORSHIP IS BELIEVABLE.)

3. ~~PRISON~~ OPTIONS RESCINDED----

ON FEBRUARY 7, EMBASSY REFUGEE OFFICER WAS INFORMED  
BY GOA FOREIGN OFFICE CONTACT THAT THE FIVE PSN  
DETAINEES GRANTED OPTION TO THE UNITED STATES BY THE  
GOA ON JANUARY 24 (BUENOS AIRES 0798) HAVE HAD THEIR  
OPTION CASES "RECONSIDERED" BY THE GOA AND THAT ALL  
FIVE APPROVALS HAVE SINCE BEEN RESCINDED. THIS IS  
THE FIRST TIME THIS HAS HAPPENED AND AT THIS POINT  
WE CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR THE GOA ACTION. WE SUSPECT  
IT MAY BE RELATED TO THE OFTEN STATED VIEW IN THE GOA  
THAT THE OPTION PROGRAM HAS BEEN EXPLOITED BY TERRORISTS  
WHO HAVE RETURNED TO ARGENTINA AFTER BEING RELEASED.

4. ~~HUMAN RIGHTS~~ ASPECTS----

TWO LEADERS OF THE MENDOZA OFFICE OF THE LEAGUE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (LIGA) WERE ARRESTED FEBRUARY 4 BY  
THE MENDOZA POLICE. THE CHARGES ARE NOT KNOWN. ONE  
OF THOSE UNDER ARREST REPORTEDLY IS THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE LOCAL CHAPTER. THOUGH HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS  
WERE ALERTED TO THE ARRESTS, THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLICITY  
THUS FAR, EVEN IN THE BUENOS AIRES HERALD WHICH WOULD  
NORMALLY REPORT SUCH AN EVENT. OUR HUMAN RIGHTS CONTACTS  
ARE SURPRISED BY THE ARRESTS AND SPECULATE THAT THEY  
ARE THE WORK OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, POSSIBLY WORKING  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH HARDLINE ELEMENTS WISHING TO EMBARRASS  
THE GOA AT THE UNHRC IN GENEVA. OUR SOURCES NOTE THAT  
GENERAL LEPORE, THE MENDOZA AREA COMMANDER, HAD A GOOD  
WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LIGA BUT WAS ON VACATION  
AT THE TIME OF THE ARRESTS. THE LACK OF PUBLICITY ON  
THIS SUBJECT MAY BE ROOTED IN THE VIEWS OF THE ARGENTINE  
COMMUNIST PARTY (PCA) WHICH CONTROLS THE LIGA AND WHICH  
TACITLY SUPPORTS THE GOA. THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BE  
LOATH TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT.

5. ~~AN ARREST WITH SILVER LINING?~~----

THE PRESS ANNOUNCED THAT A MEMBER OF THE TROTSKYITE  
WORKERS SOCIALIST PARTY (PST) JORGE EDUARDO SAEZ WAS IN  
DETENTION, CHARGED WITH SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES. SAEZ,  
WHO WAS ARRESTED JANUARY 10, ALLEGEDLY POSSESSED A  
WRITTEN PLAN FOR ACTIONS PROTESTING THE CLOSURE OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF LUJAN, AS WELL AS PAMPHLETS PRINTED BY THE  
BANNED PST. THE JUDGE WHO ORDERED HIS DETENTION ON  
SUBVERSIVE CHARGES STATED "THE TERM SUBVERSIVE SHOULD

NOT BE RESTRICTED TO THE EXPLICIT INCITATION TO ARMED  
REBELLION... IT SHOULD BE EXTENDED EVEN TO... THOSE  
WHO CONDEMN ARMED SUBVERSION (BUT) WHO STIR UP CON-  
FRONTATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY.  
HUMAN RIGHTS SOURCES, THOUGH DISTURBED AT THE ABSURDITY  
OF THE JUDGE'S OPINION, WERE ENCOURAGED THAT SAEZ  
WOUND UP IN JAIL. LESS THAN A YEAR AGO, THEY STATE,  
A PST MEMBER LIKE SAEZ WOULD SIMPLY HAVE DISAPPEARED.

6. ~~PRISON~~ CONDITIONS----

WE HAVE LEARNED FROM A RELIABLE AND WELL-INFORMED  
SOURCE THAT NO MORE THAN 20-25 PERCENT OF RECOVERABLE PRISONERS  
ENJOY THE FULL RANGE OF RIGHTS AND BENEFITS ESTABLISHED  
IN THE APRIL 1979 PRESIDENTIAL DECREE ON PRISON  
CONDITIONS. THE OTHER 80 PERCENT, THOSE CONSIDERED  
IRRECOVERABLE, ARE DEPRIVED OF EXERCISE, READING  
MATERIAL, AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK -- ALL RIGHTS  
SPELLED OUT IN THE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE. THERE IS  
VIRTUALLY NOBODY IN THE INTERMEDIATE GROUP BETWEEN  
"RECOVERABLE" AND "IRRECOVERABLE." THE RED CROSS  
IS WORKING WITH THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND THE  
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE TO TRY TO EXTEND THE FULL RANGE  
OF RIGHTS TO ALL PRISONERS. REPORTEDLY, THE MINISTER  
OF JUSTICE IS BEING COOPERATIVE.

## 7. (U) PERMANENT ASSEMBLY SUPPORTS LUJAN STUDENTS----

THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS COME  
OUT AGAINST THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S DECISION TO  
CLOSE LUJAN UNIVERSITY. ACCORDING TO THE PERMANENT  
ASSEMBLY, THE MOVE TO CLOSE THE UNIVERSITY, CONFLICTS  
WITH ARTICLE 26 OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN  
RIGHTS OF THE UNGA WHICH STATES THAT ALL PERSONS HAVE  
A RIGHT TO EDUCATION. THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY ADDED

PRISON  
CONDITIONS  
NOT AS  
GOOD AS  
WE HAD  
THOUGHT.

UNIVERSITY  
CLOSED BY  
GOA.

GOA -  
COMMUNIST  
PARTY  
ALLIANCE -

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five  
OPTIONS  
Rescinded

new  
ARRESTS

ARREST  
OF  
TROTSKYITE

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THAT MANY OF THE COURSES TAUGHT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
LUJAN ARE NOT TAUGHT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BUENOS AIRES,  
WHERE THE STUDENTS WILL BE TRANSFERRED. (NOTE: THE  
FIRST RECTOR OF LUJAN UNIVERSITY WAS EMILIO HIGNONE,  
A PERMANENT ASSEMBLY LEADER.)

8. (U) CIO DE LA PAZ AND GONZALEZ----

THE FEBRUARY 5 NEWSPAPERS CARRIED STORIES ON THE  
APPEARANCE OF TWO ARGENTINE ESCAPED PRISONER, OSCAR  
ALFREDO GONZALEZ AND HORACIO CIO DE LA PAZ, AT THE  
OFFICES OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. THE TWO MEN TOLD  
AMNESTY OF THEIR ESCAPE AND OF SCENES THEY HAD WITNESSED  
WHILE THEY WERE IMPRISONED. AMONG OTHER THINGS THEY  
CLAIMED THAT JEWISH PRISONERS WERE TREATED MORE HARSHLY  
THAN OTHERS. ACCORDING TO GONZALEZ AND CIO DE LA PAZ,  
THEY WERE ABLE TO ESCAPE WHILE BEING TRANSFERRED FROM  
ONE PRISON TO ANOTHER. LA PRENSA CARRIED A FULL WIRE  
SERVICE ACCOUNT OF THE TWO MEN'S STATEMENT, WITH ALL  
IT CHARGES OF TORTURE AND SUMMARY EXECUTIONS BY THE  
SECURITY FORCES.

9. (U) MOTHERS STILL UNABLE TO SEE VIDELA----

THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO UNSUCCESSFUL  
ATTEMPTED TO SEE PRESIDENT VIDELA AGAIN ON FEBRUARY 7.  
THE MOTHERS WERE TOLD THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE  
THEIR PETITION FOR AN AUDIENCE WITH VIDELA AT THE  
RECEPTION DESK. AFTER REFUSING TO GO THEY LEFT. THEY  
ALSO RELEASED A COMMUNIQUE WHICH STATED THAT A GROUP  
OF MOTHERS HAD SPOKEN TO THE POPE ON DECEMBER 19,  
REQUESTING HIM TO INTERCEDE ON THEIR BEHALF WITH  
THE GOA IN HOPES THAT MORE INFORMATION ON THE  
DISAPPEAREDS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

10. (U) VAZQUEZ AND MENEM RELEASED----

ON JANUARY 29, IT WAS ANNOUNCED TWO FAIRLY PROMINENT  
PERONISTS WERE RELEASED FROM DETENTION. THEY WERE  
JORGE VAZQUEZ, EX-DEPUTY SECRETARY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS  
AND CARLOS SAUL MENEM, EX-GOVERNOR OF LA RIOJA PROVINCE,  
WERE RELEASED FROM PEN DETENTION. MENEM HAD BEEN UNDER  
HOUSE ARREST AND VAZQUEZ UNDER "SUPERVISED LIBERTY."

11. (U) DERIAH QUOTED----

THE FEBRUARY 5 ISSUE OF "LA NACION" FRONT-PAGED  
AN AP WASHINGTON ARTICLE, REPORTING AN ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY PATT DERIAH'S STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE  
HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA. THE ARTICLE  
QUOTED HER AS STATING "...THERE HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC

REDUCTION OF DISAPPEARANCES... ONE RECEIVES THE  
IMPRESSION THAT THINGS ARE MOVING THERE (ARGENTINA).  
~~FOR A LONG TIME THE ONLY ACTION SEEMED TO BE THE~~  
OPPOSITE, TOWARDS REPRESSION."

12. [REDACTED] PERMANENT ASSEMBLY ISSUES INVITATION TO  
HARGUINDEGUY----

THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (APDH)  
ISSUED A PUBLIC INVITATION FEBRUARY 4 TO INTERIOR  
MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY ASKING HIM TO EXAMINE WITH  
IT THE LISTS OF MISSING AND DISAPPEARED. APDH  
SAID THE INVITATION WAS MOTIVATED BY A SPATE OF  
RUMORS AND REPORTS RELEASES AND REAPPEARANCES.  
HARGUINDEGUY HAS NOT REPLIED. APDH SOURCES TELL  
US THAT THERE HAVE BEEN FEW RUMORS AND FEWER  
REAPPEARANCES. HOWEVER, THEY WERE AFRAID THAT  
THE GOA WAS GOING TO TRY TO USE ERRORS ON THEIR  
LIST, AS WELL AS UNANNOUNCED RELEASES OF DETAINEES...  
TO DISQUALIFY THE CLAIMS ABOUT THE NUMBERS OF  
DETAINED AND DISAPPEARED. THE INVITATION TO THE  
MINISTER WAS INTENDED TO PREEMPT SUCH A TACTIC.  
CASTRO

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